

2/PRTs

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A Color Projection Display ~~5788 Rec'd~~ PCT/PTO 01 SEP 2004

Background of the invention

This invention pertains to color projection display systems, specifically a 3D/2D convertible color projection display system.

5 Because of the development of high definition television (HDTV), many new display techniques have emerged, such as plasma display plate (PDP), thin film transistor (TFT), digital micromirror device (DMD), and liquid crystal on silicon (LCoS) technique. Chinese Patents No.01113471.2 and No.02217356.0 provided a new color display solution, which combines the LCoS and micro optical
10 interference filers together to form a new color LCoS device. This is a very promising micro-display device, because of its high resolution, high optical efficiency, high image quality, and low cost.

However, all of the above-mentioned techniques are for plane display without any stereoscopic effect. Stereoscopic vision is still a dream for display technology.

15 Many efforts have been made for this. For example, US Patent No.6351280 gave a solution where many micro polaroid stripes were put on a LCD display panel. When an observer wears a pair of polaroid glasses to watch the said panel, each of his/her eyes will see the different image, thus getting a stereoscopic effect. Until now, however, these methods have been too complicated, or not comfortable, and
20 therefore not very practical.

Summary of the invention

An objective of the present invention is to provide a color stereoscopic (3D)

projection display system with the advantage of simple structure, high optical efficiency, and low cost.

A further objective of the present invention is to provide a projection display system with six primary colors, which creates richer, more vivid, and more lifelike color images with higher optical efficiency.

A further objective of the present invention is to provide a color projection display system that is convertible between the 3D stereoscopic display and the 2D six primary color display.

The present invention's color projection display system consists of two color LCoS panels, a group of polarizing beam splitters, and a projection lens. The said color LCoS panel is a conventional LCoS panel combined with a micro dichroic filter array. The said group of polarizing beam splitters divides the incident illuminated light into linear polarized light 1 and linear polarized light 2, with the polarization direction of linear polarized light 2 being orthogonal to that of linear polarized light 1. The said linear polarized light 1 and linear polarized light 2 come out at different exit places of the said group of polarizing beam splitters. Each of the said color LCoS panels is located at one of the said exit places of the said group of polarizing beam splitters, and modulates the said linear polarized light 1 or 2 according to the inputting image signal. The polarization directions of the said modulated linear polarized light beams 3 and 4 are rotated 90 degree from those of the said linear polarized light beams 1 and 2, respectively. The said modulated linear polarized light beams 3 and 4 are reflected back to the said group of polarizing beam splitters,

and are combined to be one image beam. The said image beam incidents on the projection lens and is projected out for display.

When the inputting image signals to the two said color LCoS panels correspond to different view angles, the present invention's color projection display system can display 3D stereoscopic images. And when the inputting image signals to the two said color LCoS panels are identical, the said display system will display 2D color images, or specifically 2D six primary color images if the primary colors of the said two color LCoS panels are different.

The said group of polarizing beam splitters can be constructed in several different ways. It may consist of just one conventional polarizing beam splitter. Or it may form a cuboid comprising four right-angle prisms with polarizing beam splitter coatings on their right-angle surfaces, which are arranged in a cross shape. Or it may be a cuboid comprising four conventional polarizing beam splitter cubes, with the four hypotenuses (polarizing beam splitter coating surfaces) of the said four polarizing beam splitter cubes constituting a cross or other shape.

The image quality can be improved by inserting half wave or quarter wave plates at the appropriate place.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is the principle sketch of the present invention's color projection display system;

Fig. 2 is the sketch of a real example of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is the sketch of another example of the present invention;

Fig. 4 is the sketch of another example of the present invention with half wave plates.

5 Detailed Description

Fig. 1 is the principle sketch of the present invention's color projection display system. It includes a polarizing beam splitter (1), two color LCoS panels (2, 3), and a projection lens (4). The said color LCoS panels can be conventional LCoS panels combined with micro dichroic filter array as described in Chinese Patents
10 No.01113471.2 and No.02217356.0. The said color LCoS panels (2,3) are located at the two adjacent surfaces of the said polarizing beam splitter (1), and can be embedded individually with image signals corresponding to different view angles. The incident white natural light beam (5) is divided by the said polarizing beam splitter (1) into two orthogonal linear polarized light beams, s- polarized beam (6)
15 and p-polarized beam (7), which then come to the said color LCoS panels (3) and (2) separately. The said polarized beams (6) and (7) are reflected and modulated by the said color LCoS panels (2) and (3). The modulated p-polarized beam (8) and s-polarized beam (9) go through the said polarizing beam splitter (1) again and are combined into one image beam (10). The said image beam (10) is amplified and
20 projected out by the projection lens (4) for display. Thus, part of the light in the projection display image is the p-polarized light from color LCoS panel (3), and the other part is s-polarized light from color LCoS panel (2).

When an observer wears a pair of polaroid glasses with orthogonal polarization direction for each eye, each eye can only see either the s- polarized image or the p-polarized image. Since the image signals inputted into the color LCoS panels (2) and (3) correspond to different view angle, each eye will see the image from a different view angle, thus creating a stereoscopic (3D) effect.

When the inputting image signals to the said color LCoS panels (2) and (3) are the same, the projected images from the said two color LCoS panels can be aligned to superposition by adjusting the relative position of the said two color LCoS panels.

This alignment can be fixed during the initial assembly. Thus, the observer can see the 2D display image without any special glasses. Because there is no need for a polarization convert device for this projection system, both directions of polarized light can be used, and the optical efficiency is increased. And the color grade will be increased by using two color LCoS panels, especially when that two color LCoS panels are with different primary colors. For example, when one of the said color LCoS panels has red, green, and blue as the primary colors and the other color LCoS panel has cyan, magenta, and yellow as the primary colors, the comprised color projection system will be a six primary color display system with richer, more vivid, and more lifelike display color.

The present invention's color projection display system is simple, low-cost, and high in optical efficiency. It can be used for both color 3D stereoscopic display and conventional 2D color display, or 2D six primary color display for richer, more vivid, and more lifelike color image. Another advantage of this system is that it can

be switched easily between 3D stereoscopic display and 2D color display by controlling the inputting image signals to the two color LCoS panels.

Part of the illuminating light on color LCoS panel (2) and (3) is modulated and changed in polarization direction for projection display. The other part of the illuminating light is reflected back by the color LCoS panels without changing its polarization direction. This part of light can be reused to increase the optical efficiency and luminance through a recycle system. (See also Chinese Patent No.02217355.2.)

For an available polarizing beam splitter, the extinction ratio of transmission (about 1000) is much greater than that of reflection (about 20). However, for the application as shown in Fig. 1, both transmission and reflection are used, which will cause reduction of the overall projection image.

Fig. 2 is an improved example of the present invention's color projection system.

The said group of polarizing beam splitters (11) is a cuboid comprising four right angle prisms with polarizing beam splitter coatings(a) on their right-angle surfaces, while the said four polarizing beam splitter coated surfaces constitute a cross (as shown in Fig. 2). Two color LCoS panels (2) and (3) are located separately at the output ends of the light path of p-polarized beam (6) and s-polarized beam (7), and are parallel to the hypotenuse surface of the said right angle prisms (as shown in Fig. 2). Since the illuminating light beams (6) and (7) and the image light beams (8) and (9) all pass through the said polarizing beam splitter coatings (a) twice (twice transmission, or twice reflection), the extinction ratio will be increased greatly,

which will obviously increase the contrast of the projection image and improve the image quality.

Fig. 3 is another improved example of the present invention's color projection system. In this example, the said group of polarizing beam splitters (11) is a cuboid comprising four commercial polarizing beam splitter cubes (12), while the four hypotenuses (polarizing beam splitter coating surface) of the said four polarizing beam splitter cubes constitute a cross (as shown in Fig. 3). The working principle of this example is exactly the same as that of the example shown in Fig. 2. The advantage of this example is that it can use commercial polarizing beam splitter cubes, which will be helpful for mass production and cost reduction.

Fig. 4 is a further improved example of Fig. 3's projection system. Again, the said group of polarizing beam splitters (11) is a cuboid comprising four commercial polarizing beam splitter cubes (12). The only difference from Fig. 3's system is that there is a halfwave plate (13) inserted between every two polarizing beam splitter cubes (12), as shown in Fig. 4. A halfwave plate can rotate the polarization direction of a polarized light beam by 90 degrees; i.e., it can change an s-polarized light into a p-polarized light, or vice versa. Thus each illuminated light beam or each image light beam will pass through the polarizing beam splitter coatings twice (once transmission, once reflection), which will be very helpful for the balance of the two image light beams. The extinction ratio of both image beams will be very close, resulting in the maximum extinction ratio of the overall image beam. The image contrast will be increased, and the image quality will be improved.

Inserting a quarterwave plate in front of a color LCoS panel will also be helpful for improving the image contrast. (See also US Patent No.5,327,270)

The present invention's color projection system is capable of easily achieving stereoscopic display and multiple primary color display, and easily switching from
5 one mode to the other.

It is to be understood that the invention is not limited to features and embodiments hereinabove specifically set forth, but may be carried out in other ways without departure from its spirit.